

and to which pimentos, onions, fish, or ciriques (land crabs sp.) have been added. This sauce is used to moisten and season the otherwise insipid cassava bread. The noxious character of the manioc juice disappears in the boiling. 252

The unbaked manioc meal is sometimes sweetened with sugarcane juice, spiced, and then wrapped in plantain leaves, tied into little packages, and boiled to form a sort of dumpling known as "canqui."

Fond of liquor as the Caribs undoubtedly are, they no longer make any native drink (unless it be illicit rum), nor have they done so, it seems, for a considerable time. There are those, however, who remember an old man who used to make a beverage from the glou-glou palm and from that known to the Caribs as yattahou (*Acrocomia sclerocarpa*, and *Syagrus amaro* (?) respectively), but they were unable to tell me how it was made. 273

Pestle and mortar are indispensable utensils in any Carib home. With them are ground coffee, cocoa, castor-oil nuts, and everything else that has to be reduced to powder or paste. The former is club-shaped and about 3½ feet long, the latter being in the form of a jar some 2½ feet in height and 10 inches across the mouth. Both are made of any hard heavy wood such as white cedar or "tan" (*Byrsonima* sp.). 415

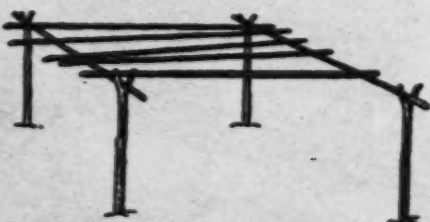


FIGURE 33.—Boucan or Carib barbecue.

Inside or outside of every Carib kitchen stands one or several boucan (fig. 33) (whence "buccaneer"), ready for smoke drying an excess of fish or game, which, thus preserved, will keep anywhere from a month to a year. Sticks of guépois (*Myrcia leptoclada* D. G.) or of bois d'Inde (*Pimenta acris* Sw.) are most often used for this purpose, and are stuck in the ground so as to form an erection some 2½ feet high resembling two football goals about 4 feet apart, across which other sticks are laid to form a grid. 251

A primitive type of cane press, also common to Guiana, is to be found outside nearly all the houses in the reserve (fig. 34). It consists of a thick post stuck in the ground. A cavity is hollowed out near the top, and a hole pierced, through which a lever passes. The cane, placed transversely across the mouth of the cavity, is crushed by the lever being brought down on successive sections, thus expressing the juice, which runs down grooves into a waiting receptacle. "Vasou" (sugarcane juice) is a cheap and ever-ready sweetening matter for coffee, cocoa, etc. 257

Despite its name, the terrine is a wooden bowl (rather like the modern salad bowls), which was and sometimes still is used for wash- 415

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

Eleusine indica (Linnaeus) Gaertner, Fruct. & Sem. 1: 8. 1788. 824^x
Fowl's Foot, Pied Poule.

A weedy grass native to India but widely distributed in the tropical and warm temperate regions of both hemispheres.

Caribs crush the plant with salt and apply it as a poultice [752] to sprains and dislocations.

Specimen citation: 185, 2462, 3620.

Gynerium sagittatum (Aublet) Beauvois, Ess. Agrost. 138. t. 24. f. 1812.

Arundo saccharoides Poiret in Lam. Encycl. Sup. 4: 703. 1816.
Arrow, Wild Cane. — Roseau. — *buléua* (m) (« arrow », « pierce »), *mabúlu*, *mabúru*.*

This tall reed is found throughout tropical America where it is widely used as laths in light construction work. It is to be seen in Dominica chiefly along stream-banks where it often forms colonies in full sunlight. The grass is grown by the Barama River Caribs of Guiana under the name *mapuru epui*. From the stems they fashion shafts for arrows.

For plaiting bands subsequently sewn together by the Dominica Caribs to make hats, the midrib of the leaf is peeled, bleached by laying it in the dew, and sun-dried. The young main-stem, prepared in the same manner as that of *Ischnosiphon arouma*, is used for weaving small decorative baskets (either alone or in conjunction with split stems of *Ischnosiphon arouma*), fans, mats, etc.; while more mature stems are chosen for edging and reinforcing the corners of Carib baskets. Mature inflorescence stems are very straight and were used formerly for arrows as they are by lowland Indians even today in other parts of Latin America. The « heart » (i. e. the young shoot of unopened leaves) of this species is used as a shampoo when washing the hair (as are the small [285] [411] 824^x 302

* BARTON (7) lists three aboriginal names for « roseau ». All probably apply to *Gynerium sagittatum* but we are certain only of *buléua*, which he records: « ... it produces its flower at the top, and bears a 'panache' (plume) which when detached leaves a perfectly straight rod ». He states, further, that laths and palisading (wattlework) are made from the stems of the roseau called *mabúlu*, and baskets from that called *sikakot*. All these uses are still known to the Carib with reference to the ordinary roseau described above. [417] 285

Cassia occidentalis Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 377. 1753.

Ditremeza occidentalis Britton & Rose in Br. & Wils. Bot. Porto Rico (Sci. Surv. Porto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5) 377. (1924). Coffee Senna, Jumbie Coffee, Wild Coffee, Negro Coffee, Stinking Weed. — Z'Herbes Puantes («Female»). — *kuldbule*.

This species was first collected in Jamaica but it is widely distributed in the tropics and subtropics and in the warm temperate portions of the United States.

The seeds of *Cassia occidentalis* have been used as a coffee substitute in many regions, and the plant itself is employed in domestic medicine. An infusion of the leaves has been employed in West Africa in the treatment of yellow fever while an ointment derived from the plant has also been used for cutaneous diseases.

Seeds of the «female» z'herbes puantes are utilized by the Island Carib as a coffee substitute (quite unnecessary in a country where coffee is grown). A tea made from the leaves is considered a «cure-all» for colds, fever, for washing cuts, and for pregnant women. «Teas» are also made from the roots and flowers, the former being used for colds, the latter for «cough».

Specimen citation: 123 (T), 3187.

Desmodium axillare (Swartz) DeCandolle Prod. 2: 333. 1825.
var. *axillare*.

Meibomia axillaris O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. 1: 195. 1891.
Tick Trefoil. — Cacoyer.

A creeping herbaceous species of tropical America.

Caribs chop up a whole plant of cacoyer, place it in water and then drink the decoction as a «cure» for gonorrhea.

Specimen citation: 3384.

Erythrina corallodendron Linnaeus var. *bicolor* Krukoff, Brittonia 3: 275. 1939.

Coral Tree. — Bois Immortel, Immortel.

This variety of *E. corallodendron* is limited to the Lesser Antilles. In Dominica it is to be found at lower and middle elevations.

The Creoles often use the trees as living and permanent («im-mortal») boundary or fence posts.

BURSERACEAE. GUMBO-LIMBO FAMILY.

*824 *Bursera simaruba* (Linnaeus) Sargent, Gard. & Forest 3: 260.
1890.

Bursera gummifera Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. ed. 2: 471. 1762.

Elaphrium simaruba Rose in No. Am. Fl. 25: 246. 1911.

Gumbo-Limbo, West Indian Birch, Turpentine Tree, Gum Tree.
— Gommier Rouge.

This conspicuous tree is widespread in the West Indies, also in the continental American tropics, particularly in dry thickets at lower elevations.

In the Greater Antilles gumbo-limbo is frequently planted as a roadside shade tree.

[752] The Caribs apply the fragrant gum of gommier rouge locally
[417] as a plaster for contusion or internal injury. Because cut posts
readily take root and grow, the tree is also used to construct
«live» fences.

Specimen citation: 3146.

Dacryodes excelsa Vahl, Skr. Nat. Selsk. 6: 117. 1810.

Dacryodes hexandra Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 174. 1859.

Gommier. — *sibu* («support, buttress»).

A tall columnar tree found in the Antilles from Puerto Rico to Grenada. In Dominica's mountain rain forests the gommier is one of the dominant species.

Throughout the Caribbee isles the straight trunks of this species have been much used in the construction of dugout canoes.

[314] A white fragrant resinous gum (known to the Caribs as *kurutai*),
«gum elemi» exudes freely from any incision made on the dark
gray trunks of gommier rees. The material hardens in the air so
the gum can be readily scraped off and put to a number of uses.
[302] BRETON (7) records that it served as an unguent used by the
youths and maidens on feast days. It is employed to light fires
[373] and to make torches [with the wick of pounded bois diable wood
(*Licania ternatensis*), tree fern caudex (*Cyathea arborea*), or zica-
que wood (*Chrysobalanus icaco*)]. Boiled together with shari oil
[346] and mixed with cotton-lint, maho fiber (*Guatteria*, *Hibiscus*, etc.),